

## Foreword

Nothing could be more appropriate either than that there should be a symposium on defamation at this moment in history, or that it should be dedicated to the memory of John E. Hallen, whose recent and premature death has deprived the faculty at Ohio State of a beloved colleague and countless others elsewhere, like the present writer, of a long-time and admired friend. John Hallen's favorite subject was Torts and the aspect of it to which he devoted the greatest interest and research was defamation.

Current political developments have brought under the most critical scrutiny the nature of man's reputation and the extent of his right to be protected therein in the face of a claim of privilege asserted in the name of the public interest. Had John Hallen lived he would have undoubtedly brought his keen mind and broad experience to bear on the newest developments in this vital area. It is tragic that he will never be able to do so, yet it remains true that any future work in this field will owe much to the basic work which John Hallen did live to complete. All students of Torts are familiar with his three major writings on Defamation: "Fair Comment" 3 *Texas L. Rev.* 41 (1929); "Character and Belief Necessary for the Conditional Privilege in Defamation" 25 *Ill. L. Rev.* 865 (1931); "Excessive Publication in Defamation" 16 *Minn. L. Rev.* 160 (1932). These are not ephemeral works; they represent a permanent addition to our wisdom.

Of the four authors represented in the Symposium, two were former students of John Hallen. These perhaps had the most intimate experience with his skill as a teacher and his clarity of mind as a thinker on Torts. Surely however, the others, as well as the writer of these remarks, will yield little precedence to them in their admiration for John Hallen and their regret at his passing.

*Philip Mechem*